

Message Text

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ACTION IO-14

INFO OCT-01 EA-12 NEA-11 ISO-00 AID-05 FDRE-00 HA-05

EB-08 INR-10 HEW-06 ICA-20 DODE-00 CA-01 CIAE-00

/093 W

-----124296 261437Z /53

R 260431Z MAY 78

FM AMEMBASSY DACCA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 9482

INFO USMISSION GENEVA

AMEMBASSY RANGOON

AMEMBASSY ROME

CINCPAC

UNCLAS DACCA 3352

CINCPAC FOR POLAD: ROME FOR FODAG

DEPARTMENT PASS ALSO AID/ASIA AND AID/OFDA

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS : PBOR, PINT, EAID, BG, BM

SUBJECT : ARKANESE REGUGEE PROBLEM

1. IN A MEETING WITH THE MISSION DISASTER RELIEF OFFICER THE MORNING OF 25 MAY, MAJOR A.H. QURESHI, THE SECRETARY GENERAL, BANGLADESH RED CROSS (BRC) PROVIDED THE FOLLOWING INFORMATION CONCERNING BRC ACTIVITIES AT THE NINE REFUGEE CAMPS.

2. THE BANGLADESH RED CROSS HAS MADE A FORMAL APPEAL FOR ASSISTANCE TO THE AMERICAN RED CROSS THROUGH THE LEAGUE OF RED CROSS SOCIETIES IN GENEVA. THEY HAVE SPECIFICALLY ASKED FOR:

1,000 METRIC TONS OF BISCUITS

500 METRIC TONS OF MILK POWDER

100 METRIC TONS OF BABY FOOD

850 ROLLS OF PLASTIC SHEETING

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50,000 EACH, BABY/CHILDREN GARMENTS

100,000 DOSES OF PENICILLIN

50,000 DOSES OF AMPICILLIN

100,000 VIALS OF CONCENTRATED VITAMIN A & D

100,000 IRON TABLETS

50,000 DOSES OF ORAL REHYDRATION TABLETS

2,000 TUBES OF EYE OINTMENT

2,000 VIALS OF OPTIC (EYE) DROPS

3. OF ADDITIONAL "FIELD HOSPITAL REQUISITES", MAJOR QURESHI SAID THEY HAVE REQUESTED 30,000 DOSES OF PRIMAQUINE PHOSPHATE TABLETS; 100,000 DOSES OF FANSIDAR; 200,000 DOSES TETRACYCLINE; AND 1,000,000 MULTIPLE VITAMIN CAPSULES. (THE LATTER THREE ITEMS HAVE ALREADY BEEN DELIVERED TO THE BRC). THEIR REQUEST TO THE AMERICAN RED CROSS ALSO INCLUDED \$400,000 IN CASH TO BE USED FOR OPERATION OF THEIR FEEDING PROGRAM, AND FOR THE PURCHASE OF LUNGIS AND SAREES.

4. MAJOR QURESHI REPORTED THAT THE FOLLOWING DONATIONS HAVE ALREADY BEEN RECEIVED:

\$200,000 FROM CANADIAN GOVERNMENT;
POUNDS 2,000 FROM U.K. RED CROSS;
\$1,000 FROM NEW ZEALAND RED CROSS;
YEN 632,000,000 FROM JAPANESE RED CROSS:
EQUIVALENT TO A LITTLE OVER DOLLARS 3
MILLION;
400 MT OF FOOD AND 10 KG OF MALARIA TABLETS
FROM FRENCH RED CROSS.

5. MAJOR QURESHI INDICATED THAT, AS OF 23 MAY THERE ARE 140,000 REFUGEE, WITH 122,000 REGISTERED AND 18,000 IN THE CAMPS AWAITING REGISTRATION. REFUGEES ARE REPORTED ARRIVING UNCLASSIFIED

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AT THE RATE OF 3,000 TO 4,000 PER DAY. REFUGEES CONSIST OF 50 PERCENT CHILDREN; 30 PERCENT WOMEN AND THE BALANCE ELDERLY MALE AND FEMALE. THE NINE CAMPS WERE CONSTRUCTED OVER A 25-MILE DISTANCE, SEVERAL OF WHICH ARE LYING IN LOW GROUNDS AND MUST BE SHIFTED IMMEDIATELY. THERE IS NO POTABLE WATER SUPPLY IN AT LEAST TWO CAMPS WITH A COMBINED POPULATION OF 18,000 TO 20,000 REFUGEES.

6. THERE ARE 32 MALE AND 6 FEMALE MEDICAL PERSONNEL FROM CHITTAGONG AND COX BAZAAR AREAS, 18 OF WHOM ARE DOCTORS WITH ONLY 5-6 WORKING AT ANY ONE TIME. THE BALANCE OF THE CAMP MEDICAL PERSONNEL ARE 4TH YEAR MEDICAL STUDENTS, MIDWIVES AND NURSES. EVEN THOUGH THE RED CROSS TRIED TO GET DOCTORS, QUOTE ON PAYMENT UNQUOTE FROM DACCA QUOTE NO ONE WAS WILLING TO SHARE THE HARDSHIPS OF THE CAMPS UNQUOTE. AS OF 24 MAY, THERE WERE 171 REPORTED DEATHS AND 78 CHOLERA CASES BEING TREATED.

7. 20,000 MAUNDS (727 MT) OF WHEAT FLOUR HAVE BEEN RELEASED BY THE BDG WITH 7,000 (254.5 MT) MAUNDS RECEIVED AT THE CAMPS AND 5,000 (181.8 MT) MAUNDS ACTUALLY DISTRIBUTED AS OF 23 MAY. MAJOR QURESHI REPORTED THAT APPROXIMATELY ONE-THIRD OF THE POPULATION HAS RECEIVED RATION WHILE THE BALANCE ARE SURVI-

VING ON THE SUPPLIES THEY CARRIED WITH THEM TO THE CAMPS.
THE GOVERNMENT'S PLAN CALLS FOR SUPPLY OF 200 GRAMS OF WHEAT FLOUR PER CHILD AND 400 GRAMS OF WHEAT FLOUR PER ADULT, WITH SUPPLEMENTARY BUSCUITS AND OTHER ITEMS PROVIDED FOR BY THE BRS. ON HIS RECENT VISIT TO THE REFUGEE CAMPS, MAJOR QURESHI NOTED THAT THE REFUGEES ARE UNFAMILIAR WITH THE UTILIZATION OF WHEAT FLOUR. THEY MIX THE WHEAT FLOUR WITH WATER TO FORM GRUEL AND BELIEVED TO BE A CONTRIBUTING FACTOR TO THE INCREASING INCIDENCES OF STOMACH AND INTESTINAL PROBLEMS.

8. THE MISSION AGAIN NOTES THE DISPARITY IN STATISTICS BEING REPORTED AND SHARES MAJOR QURESHI'S FEELING THAT A GREAT DEAL OF THE PROBLEM IS DUE TO LACK OF CENTRAL MANAGEMENT AND DIRECTION, AND THE CHANGING OF CAMP SUPERVISORS EVERY TEN DAYS.
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AS THE MAJOR OBSERVED, IT TAKES THE FIRST TWO DAYS TO UNPACK AND SETTLE IN AND THE LAST TWO DAYS TO PACK UP AND MOVE OUT. THE INTERVENING SIX DAYS ARE SPENT IN TRYING TO DECIDE COURSES OF ACTION.
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